

23 February 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Admiral Showers

SUBJECT : Random Comments For Dr. Hall Briefing

1. The following are some thoughts that might be useful to test during your briefing for Dr. Hall.

2. ASD(I) desire for an overall intelligence management information system: (a possible ASD(I) concern)

(a) It is probably not possible to design a single, integrated intelligence management information system to provide all the data needed for all intelligence resource-related decisions. Limitations include our present technological state-of-the-art and uncertainties concerning the kinds of decisions that will be required and the political climate in which they will be made. There are other phenomena that tend to defeat the development of an ideal system. Intelligence resources may not be capable of being distributed with precision among collectors with multi-target and multi-area capabilities, or against unanticipated collection opportunities such as, for example, a Penkovsky. It may not be possible to place relative values on the actual and potential capabilities of some collection systems, or to determine the probability of collection success for the dollars expended against specific targets. It may not be feasible to assign values to redundant confirmation, to differentiate between substantive information and trivia, to quantify timeliness, or to provide relative values for precise and gross data. The question is not to develop a system that will be all things to all users, but a mechanism for providing useful and reasonably attainable information, at the necessary points in the decision process, to the people on whose judgments decisions will be made.

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(b) Judgments concerning intelligence phenomena are made in consideration of five primary factors:

- (1) The objectives that are to be attained.
- (2) The intelligence tools that are, or are projected to be, available and their actual and potential capabilities.
- (3) The effectiveness of intelligence tools, in relation to each other, against specific needs and specific geographic areas.
- (4) The cost of the tools and their use.
- (5) The domestic and international political environment.

DCID 1/2 and Part I, Annex A, JSOP, provide usable statements of intelligence objectives, for the first time, for the mid-range period. Still needed are intelligence objectives for the near-term period. National level intelligence tools have been fairly well identified. The systematic description of their capabilities remains to be done. Determining the relative effectiveness of the tools depends on norms and standards that have yet to be defined, and the development of a methodology for comparison. CIRIS provides an in-being, community-wide, flexible system for projecting what it costs to employ our intelligence tools to meet given needs in specific geographic areas. It provides a way to apply the common denominator for dollars to intelligence questions. Information concerning the political environment, ever-changing, most probably cannot be systematized.

(c) It is also important to remember that were an all-encompassing information system available, providing complete, accurate, up-to-date, minute data across-the-board, there would still be no assurance that the

data would be used, and even if it were, that better decisions would result. Our job, however, is not to assure better decisions, but to provide the information that will make them possible.

3. CIRIS is not useful: (another possible ASD(I) allegation)

(a) Congress has demonstrated its increasing concern with what our intelligence programs and tools cost; that is, the cost of our efforts to satisfy our intelligence needs. We can anticipate that as dollars become scarcer and the intelligence world becomes more visible, Congress will demand information concerning the post facto cost of intelligence actually produced and the degree to which it did, in fact, satisfy the projected needs on which the current year's budget was based and against which funds were authorized and appropriated. The problem with CIRIS may be not that it isn't useful, but that its scope has been too narrow. If we are to be able to answer the kinds of questions we anticipate the Congress will be asking, we will have to close the feedback loop so that judgments concerning the future of intelligence programs can be made in the light of the actual product-value-cost of those programs, and so that the judgments can be backed-up in terms that are clear and responsive to the Congress.

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4. A Possible Future Development in Congressional Committee Information Gathering. Paragraphs 2 and 3, above, dealt with points and arguments that ASD(I) might raise. Paragraph 4 is merely to report some early indications of an improving capability on the part of Congressional committees to inform themselves.

(a) Some political scientists have observed that the Congress' traditional incremental approach to appropriations and the simplifying strategies that have been used as the basis for committee decisions on the budget, have been overtaken by the technical complexity and astronomical cost of the sophisticated systems and programs contained in the budget. The official adoption of PPB and its increasing acceptance by the Congress has created strong pressures to modify the object classification ("line item") system and to provide a rational alternative to the "muddling through" methodology that "satisfices." The development of a more rational appropriations strategy will depend on the degree to which the Congress can free itself from dependence on executive agencies for information on the programs and things included in the budget. For this reason, it is plausible to expect that the Congress will develop its own automated information system over the next several years. Although such a development poses many questions concerning changes in the committee system and the rules, expectations and strategies of the players in ^{the} budgetary/appropriations process, the first and most significant question is the source of the data that will load Congress' information system. If the intelligence community is to stay abreast of Congress in the information business, and if the data used by the Congress for appropriations decisions is to parallel the data used in arriving at the budget, we had best get on with expanding and improving CIRIS, and be prepared to provide the kinds of data inputs to

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the Congress that we want it to have. On the other hand, one should be mindful now of the perils and horrors that might be visualized by intelligence managers if intelligence data on activities and resources were called for to be placed in a Congressional data bank. We should start considering, now, the extent and character of the information that we might be willing to provide outside of the intelligence community. Whatever this extent, for control purposes by intelligence community management levels, any such data should come only from a single community-wide source, presented in a terminology and degree of detail that is deemed acceptable to intelligence community managers. Under this scenario, a centralized, authoritative, tested, multi-purpose data base -- controlled by the DCI under his authority to protect intelligence sources and methods and to coordinate the community -- would appear to be highly desirable. CIRIS is on the way to having such a capability.

5. Some Other Considerations

(a) Continued reductions in intelligence funds will force us to make hard choices among "essential" things and "jobs." When choices must be made among essentials, the question isn't the "biggest bang for the buck" as much as the "least loss for the buck." CIRIS is the only tool we have that lets us look at the cost of what we give up in terms of effort against specific targets.

(b) We must have some way to surface questions concerning whether our amount of effort is in line with priorities. CIRIS figures won't answer the question but they will expose areas about which questions should be asked.

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(c) We need to close the feedback loop for our own use. What did we get for what we spent against given targets in geographic areas in terms of satisfying user requirements and filling intelligence gaps? We need to be able to relate the cost of results to the cost of programs.



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